

MEN'S VOLLEYBALL

Competition tastes bitter for Reds

Upcoming tourney at Dalhousie provides opportunity for revenge

by Tom Liston
Sports Staff

The Men's Volleyball team got their first taste of competition outside the AUAA in this past weekend's Dal Classic. Unfortunately, it did not taste sweet as the Varsity Reds dropped their first four games en route to seventh place finish. Put in perspective though, this was not such a bad outing for the Reds.

The Dal Classic saw eight teams from Universities across Canada: Saskatchewan, Western Ontario, Guelph, Queens, Waterloo, Memorial, Dalhousie and the Varsity Reds. UNB met Waterloo in the first round-robin game where they were defeated in three straight games. The Reds managed to win a game off Guelph before losing 3-1 in their second game.

This sent UNB into their last round robin game against arch-rival

Dalhousie Tigers. Only one week before the tournament, the Varsity Reds put on an inspired effort in front of their home fans showing Dalhousie that UNB is for real. However, in the tournament the Reds did not make some key plays and dropped three straight to the Tigers. The team realizes that they can compete with Dalhousie and they remain optimistic. Power hitter Mike Walsh echoes that feeling, "We're getting so close to finally taking at least a game off Dal ... if it doesn't happen by the end of this season, we will beat them next year."

The loss to Dalhousie sent UNB into the consolation semi-final, where the Reds were dumped by Saskatchewan 3-0. The defeat left UNB to face AUAA counterpart Memorial in their final game. Coach Paul Belanger saw the game as a must win, and the players responded with a closely fought match. After splitting the first four games, the match went to a fifth and deciding showdown. The Varsity Reds prevailed by winning the final game by a 15-13 margin.

Even though UNB finished in seventh place, Belanger was pleased

in light of the tough competition, and his team's improvement in key areas. He noted his players received the opponent's serve well with good passes to the setter. The scores did not reflect this as they were not "converting on key plays." He also points out that this is the Reds best finish in three years against tough competition. Many of the Western teams had a 3-inch height advantage over the Varsity Reds.

Despite the team finishing 1-5, many of the players performed well. Chris Johnson led the team with 56 kills in the tournament, while team captain Jason Scott, who has been consistently strong all season, finished with 53 kills. Coach Belanger was quite impressed the play of rookie setter Darcy Harris, who also had a strong tournament.

The Men's Volleyball team is still quite young, but are quickly becoming more experienced. UNB continues to improve and are starting to show their true potential. The team will get their next test right away as the Reds head back down to Dalhousie this weekend to play Memorial and the host team.

WOMEN'S BASKETBALL

Reds notch two more wins

Head to the Rock prepared to do battle against the much improved Seahawks this weekend

by Matt Collins
Sports Staff

Anyone who has followed UNB women's Basketball over the past decade knows the tradition behind it. It is one of winning, one of pride, and one of success. Last weekend against the nationally ranked St. FX women, the Reds showed that this legacy still lives on.

St. FX jumped out early and were seemingly all over the UNB squad. Nothing could go right for Pauline Lordon's Crew as they fell behind by as many as 16 in the first half. But it was only a matter of time before the tide would turn as the Reds launched an 18-5 run before they headed into the locker room.

The St. FX defense was the most intense pressure the UNB women had faced all year. But once they adjusted to it, things started going the way they had planned.

As Jackie Flieger explains, "there was an adjustment to the pressure but once we got used to that then we executed well on offence, and everything clicked from there on." The Reds went on to post a 69-63 victory, and reaffirmed the fact that they are a force to be reckoned with.

In her first game back since her illness, Flieger was named player of the game scoring 22 points while shooting a perfect 10-10 from the line. Also leading the way for the Reds was Laura Swift. Excellence has become her standard as she netted 22 points, grabbed 8 rebounds, and gave the ball up for five assists.

As Swift points out, this was an important victory for her team. "We had a lot to prove; not just to X or anyone else but to ourselves. We were coming off not only a loss to Saint Mary's but a poor effort and a poor game."

On Sunday, the Reds were matched up against the Dal Tigers and came at them ready for a challenge. The Reds attacked the interior defense of the Tigers early as they pounded the ball into Swift and Krista Foreman. This opened things up on the outside for the Reds shooters and as Foreman points out, is a key element to their success.

"We've got a strong game inside so we try to key in on that so other teams will double-down. We then have wings that can shoot the ball so that leaves us pretty well balanced." In fact, so balanced that Dal was un-



Laura Swift (6) was named Player of the Game against Dal. Photo Kevin G. Porter

able to contain the potent Reds offence. UNB went on to seize the 'Eye Of The Tiger', posting a 72-59 victory.

As stated above, the Reds attack is simply dynamic. All five starters were in double figures, and when any team has that many offensive weapons they're going to be tough to beat. Swift lead the way again with 24 points, 10 rebounds and 4 assists, and was named player of the game.

These were undoubtedly the biggest games of the year for the women. And when the Reds are challenged by teams as competitive as Dal and St. FX. They have proven they can rise to the occasion. As coach Pauline Lordon explains, the team played to their capability. "We showed a little more heart and aggression then we've been showing. Although I always think there is more to give. But we played hard, and I was most impressed with their work ethic."

VIEW From The Cheap Seats

By Mark Savoie

Two days from now, in Atlanta, the National Football League will be sponsoring the North American Wife Beating Festival! That's right, folks! The Super Bowl! The one day of the year that a woman is most likely to get the living shit kicked out of her by her mate. Ah yes, football. A game truly reflective of our society.

I'm not here to expound upon the evils of this situation, I'm not nearly qualified to do so, nor is this the best forum for such a treatise. All I can do is attempt to determine why a mere sporting event would create such an appalling statistic.

The Super Bowl is - as all should know by now the most over hyped event in the history of time. The media flock for the hosting city, and in an attempt to ask a question that hasn't already been asked a thousand times before, proceed to ask the stupidest questions ever asked outside of a freshman tutorial. Personal favorites include: "How long have you been a black quarterback?" asked of Doug Williams, and "If you were an animal at the San Diego Pro, what animal would you be?" asked of a player at a San Diego hosted Super Bowl.

Part of the problem of this over hype is that it causes people to believe that the Super Bowl is an event. Ergo, the Super Bowl part. Which, of course, means drinking. In massive amounts. It would be hypocritical of me to complain of the Super Bowl Poker Party, since I have attended a Super Bowl Poker Party each of the last several years. However, the connection between alcohol and violence is well documented. It was because of this connection that the Los Angeles Dodgers concealed the sale of beer to the bleachers during certain games.

However, people don't drink solely because of the Super Bowl. Throughout the course of a year several excuses for drinking are found. I do not doubt that each of these excuses do account for an increase in domestic violence, but none of to the degree of the Super Bowl. Why Not?

My hypotheses is that the crucial additional factor is the amount of gambling that is inherent in the Super Bowl. Rookies throughout the United States and Canada accept for more bets for the Super Bowl than for every other single event. Many of these bets are of a massive nature, for more than the better can afford to lose. This, the combination of a loss of a large amounts of money and the consumption of large amounts of alcohol leads to the potential for spousal abuse.

What can the NFL and the media do about this? I am given to understand that the NFL will be giving commercials during the game which will promote the awareness of spousal abuse. If these are actually watched, they may even be effective. However, water authorities throughout the United States have reported that they can tell when the commercial are on by the increase in water demand. In other words, you can't watch the commercial if you've got your hands full in the john and remember, those who are doing the most drinking and thus are the most likely to become violent, will also be that ones making the most trips to the john and thus are the most likely to miss the spousal abuse awareness commercials.

Beyond this there is little that can be done by the NFL that will be immediately effective. It's not realistic to expect them to reduce the hype, the whole idea of changing the networks ungodly amounts for the television rights is to get as many people as possible to watch. The only thing that the NFL can be asked to change is its support of gambling. The media should include themselves in this policy. It is absurd that people consider it as a matter of course that the news papers provide us with weekly betting advice through the season. Even here in New Brunswick where non-government gambling is illegal, this city's daily rag prints advice on how to bet. True, their advice is usually wrong, but it is advice nevertheless. So long as gambling remains an integral part of football, there will continue to be people getting pissed off during the game because they're losing their bet, and then taking it out on their wife. This is not the only cause of wife beating during the Super Bowl, but I suspect that it is a major factor.

To more adequately cope with this problem would require a greater change of lifestyles and attitudes than can be expected from any change in the NFL's policies. However, it is reasonable to expect the NFL try to change its Jerry Glanville red-neck - boys will be boys, men will be men, - macho-testosterone image. If something is not done, then the Super Bowl will become synonymous with pain and suffering throughout Canada and the United States, and not just in Buffalo.